Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card Tip Sheet

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Are you helping someone with Medicare compare drug discount cards? Start Here.

STEP 1: Know the Basics

- What? Two new options for people with Medicare: (1) Medicare-approved drug discount cards and (2) a $600 credit to pay for prescriptions.
- Who? Cards are for anyone with Medicare, except people who already have drug coverage from Medicaid. The $600 credit is for people with a card who have lower incomes.
- When? Enrollment starts May 2004. Cards can be used as early as June 2004. Program lasts until December 31, 2005.
- Why? To save money on prescription drugs.
- How? People with Medicare compare discount cards with a Medicare-approved seal on them, which are offered by private companies. They can choose a card that offers the best discounts on the drugs they need. Cost for enrolling varies by card, but is no more than $30 per year. If eligible for the $600 credit, enrolling is free.

STEP 2: Get Personal

Fill out the information on the back of this sheet, paying special attention to the tips. If the person isn't able to answer some of the questions, give him or her time to gather the information before moving on to Step 3.

STEP 3: Find Card Options

If you have access to a computer, go to www.medicare.gov and click on "Prescription Drug and Other Assistance Programs." Use the information you collected on the back of this sheet to answer the questions and learn about the drug discount cards (and other options) that are available to the person you are helping. If you don't have a computer, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) instead. The operator will walk you through these questions and mail you a list of options.

STEP 4: Compare Cards

Compare what each card offers to find the one that best meets this person's needs. Some things to consider:

- **Look for the Medicare-approved seal.** Keep in mind that a person can have only one Medicare-approved discount card. The $600 credit (if the person is eligible) can only be applied to a Medicare-approved discount card.
- If the person needs multiple drugs, check total savings and savings by drug. Sometimes the best card won't discount every drug the person needs, but could provide bigger discounts on his or her most expensive drugs. Generic alternatives for brand-name drugs might also provide the best savings.
- If the person is loyal to a particular pharmacy, look for a card that includes that pharmacy.
- If the person has addresses in more than one state or near a state border, look for a card with a national service area.

STEP 5: Enroll in a Card

Once the person determines the best card, he or she will need to fill out an enrollment form. Enrollment forms for Medicare-approved drug discount cards are available from the private company that offers the card. If the person applies for the card and the $600 credit, he or she will need to mail or fax a copy of the enrollment form with a signature. Some plans are able to enroll people over the telephone.

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Personal Information Sheet

Complete this sheet before comparing drug discount cards.
This isn't an enrollment form.

Name of Person with Medicare _____
(Must have Medicare to be eligible)

Other Health Insurance (check all that apply)

___Medicaid with drug coverage
___Veteran's benefits
___FEHBP (for federal employees/retirees)
___Indian Health Service benefits
___State Prescription Assistance Program
___Medicare Advantage plan (like a Medicare managed care plan)
___TRICARE for Life
___Employer group health plan
___Medigap plan H, I, or J
___Long-Term Care policy
___PACE
___Other

TIP: If person has outpatient drug coverage from Medicaid, STOP HERE - not eligible for drug discount card.

TIP: If person is enrolled in a Medicare managed care plan or other Medicare Advantage plan, STOP HERE and call that plan for guidance. Discount card options might be limited.

ZIP Code (primary address first, then others) _____

TIP: If person lives near a state border or in more than one state during the year, check for drug discount cards with NATIONAL service areas.

Check One: ___Married ___Single (includes widowed, divorced)

Income $_____ per month/ $ _____ per year
(if married, total income for both spouses)

TIP: If annual income is $12,569 or less for singles or $16,862 or less for a married couple, person should apply for a $600 credit on his or her drug discount card.

Preferred Pharmacy: _____
(If the person is loyal to a specific pharmacy or location, write it above.)

Current Prescriptions Used (list most expensive to least expensive)

TIP: Generic alternatives might save money.

Prescription name	Dosage of prescription (ml, mg)	Number of times a day prescription is taken	Amount paid each month

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